

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 EUR-12 DHA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00
ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9631
INFO OAU CONFERENCE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 1713

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, OAU
SUBJECT: OAU RECOGNITION OF PATRIOTIC FRONT

REF: LIBREVILLE 1669, 1675

SUMMARY: OAU SUMMIT ADOPTED AMBIGUOUS RESOLUTION JULY 5
WHICH EFFECTIVELY GIVES RECOGNITION ONLY TO PATRIOTIC
FRONT. END SUMMARY.

1. QUESTION OF PATRIOTIC FRONT IN ZIMBABWE, WHICH HAD BEEN
BUCKED TO SUMMIT BY LOME SESSION OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS,
WAS FINALLY TAKEN UP BY CHIEFS OF STATE JULY 5 IN FINAL
DAY OF THEIR CONFERENCE.

2. RESULT WAS ADOPTION BY ACCLAMATION OF AMBIGUOUSLY WORDED
RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY ZAMBIA AND AMENDED BY NIGERIA,
SENEGAL AND SIERRA LEONE (TEXT SEPTEL) WHICH HAS APPARENT
EFFECT OF GRANTING EXCLUSIVE RECOGNITION TO PATRIOTIC
FRONT WITHOUT SPECIFICALLY SAYING SO. PRINCIPAL SPEECH
IN SUPPORT OF RESOLUTION WAS MADE BY KAUNDA OF ZAMBIA,
AND PROPOSAL WAS GIVEN STRONG SUPPORT BY NIGERIA,
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SUDAN, SENEGAL AND ALGERIA.

3. FOLLOWING ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION, NIGERIAN FONMIN
GARBA STATED FMG POSITION THAT PATRIOTIC FRON WILL HENCEFORTH
BE REGARDED AS SOLE LIBERATION MOVEMENT IN ZIMBABWE
AND THAT ALL MILITARY, POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT
SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PF. ASKED WHAT SUMMIT DECISION

MEANT FOR MUZOREWA AND ANC, GARBA REPLIED SIMPLY THAT ALL MOVEMENTS SHOULD NOW JOIN PF.

4. NKOMO AND MUGAGE HELD JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE IN WAKE OF SUMMIT DECISION. TAKING MORE CONCILIATORY LINE THAN IN HIS PREVIOUS MEETING WITH PRESS (LIBREVILLE 1969, NKOMO EXPRESSED PLEASEURE AT SUMMIT ACTION AND SUPPORT BY FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS, PARTICULARLY KAUNDA. HE SAID THAT QUESTION AT HAND WAS NOT ONE OF VICTORS AND VANQUISHED, AND ADDED THAT PF WOULD "TRY TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ASSURE THAT ALL ZIMBABWEANS WHO WISH TO TAKE PART IN ARMED STRUGGLE WILL FIND ROOM IN PF." MUGABE ADDED THAT OAU DECISION WAS CLEAR RECOGNITION OF PRIORITIES ZIMBABWE. ARMED STRUGGLE TO DESTROY BRITISH COLONIALISM, IMPERIALISM, AND FASCISM, HE SAID MUST COME FIRST, AND TIME HAS NOT YET ARRIVED TO QUIBBLE OVER WHO WILL BE PRESIDENT OR PRIME MINISTER OF INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE.

5. MUZOREWA REPORTEDLY REFUSED ALL COMMENT TO PRESS, BUT SITHOLE'S FOREIGN SECRETARY (MUKOMU) ATTEMPTED HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE TO REPLY TO NKOMO AND MUGAGE. HE WAS UNABLE TO ATTRACT ATTENTION, HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF CONFLICT WITH CLOSING CEREMONIES, SO SETTLED FOR DISTRIBUTION OF STATEMENT ALONG FOLLOWING LINES: (A) SITHOLE FACTION OF ZANU DOES NOT ACCEPT DECISION SINCE PF IS FOREIGN ORGANIZATION SERVING FOREIGN INTERESTS; (B) PEOPLE OF

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ZIMBABWE WILL BE THEIR OWN LIBERATORS AND AFRICAN STATES CANNOT IMPOSE THEIR WILL; AND (C) SUMMIT DECISION MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ZIMBABWEANS TO UNITE SINCE ONLY RUSSIA-SUPPORTED NKOMO WAS NOW IN POSITION TO SOLVE UNITY ISSUE. HE ALSO STATED SITHOLE AND FOLLOWERS WILL RETURN TO ZIMBABWE, SINCE IT NO LONGER POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO CONDUCT STRUGGLE FROM OUTSIDE COUNTRY.

6. COMMENT: KAUNDA EVIDENTLY PLAYED MAJOR ROLE IN DECISION, BACKED STRONGLY BY NIGERIA, THUS LENDING WEIGHT TO VIEW EXPRESSED TO US EARLIER THAT OAU WOULD BE HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY RECOMMENDATIONS OF FRONT LINE STATES. FACTORS WHICH WEIGHTED HEAVILY IN DECISION PRESUMABLY INCLUDED TRADITIONAL AFRICAN VIEW ON NEED FOR ARMED STRUGGLE, BREAKDOWN OF GENEVA TALKS, DISTRUST OF SMITH REGIME, AND RHODESIAN ATTACKS ON MOZAMBIQUE. FEARS THAT SITUATION MIGHT TURN INTO CIVIL WAR ON ANGOLAN MODEL WERE OBVIOUS, WITH NUMEROUS AFRICAN LEADERS STRESSING THROUGHOUT CONFERENCE NEED FOR UNITY AMONG LIBERATION MOVEMENTS; THIS TOO PRESUMABLY INFLUENCED DECISION TO BACK PF.

7. INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT EVEN WITH ALL THESE FACTORS OPERATING IN FAVOR OF PF RECOGNITION, RESOLUTION AS ADOPTED REMAINS SUFFICIENTLY AMBIGUOUS TO PERMIT LOOPHOLES TO THOSE WHO SEEK THEM. RESOLUTION DOES NOT "DERECOGNIZE" EITHER MUZOREWA OR SITHOLE GROUPS, SAYS NOTHING CONCRETE ABOUT AID TO ORGANIZATION S (AS OPPOSED TO INDIVIDUALS), AND CALLS UPON MEMBER STATES TO INCREASE AID OT PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE RATHER THAN SPECIFICALLY TO PF. THUS, THERE IS SCOPE FOR OAU MEMBER STATES TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH GROUP OUTSIDE PF IF THEY WISH TO DO SO (AS SUGGESTED LAGOS 7437 NOTAL) BUT NET EFFECT OF RESOLUTION IS CLEARLY TO PUT PF IN THE SADDLE. STEIGMAN

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